DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 182 044 PS 011 200

AUTHOR Hicks, Kathryn L.
TITLE An Assessment of Child Care Needs of Students, Faculty and Staff at West Virginia Wesleyan College.
PUB DATE Dec 79
NOTE 25p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Child Care; College Faculty; *College Role; College Students; *Day Care Services; Employee Attitudes; Higher Education; *Needs Assessment; *Personnel Needs; Student Attitudes; *Student Needs; Surveys; Teacher Attitudes
IDENTIFIERS *West Virginia Wesleyan College

ABSTRACT

This study identified child care services needed by employees and students at West Virginia Wesleyan College. A child care needs assessment survey of all college personnel and married students was conducted. Results indicate 98.5% of all respondents were either in favor of or were neutral to the addition of child care services to Wesleyan's Child Development Center. Children of respondents were most frequently of school age (6 - 10). Parents wanted lunch programs and year-round operation of child care services. Parents of school age children wanted services on vacation and snow days as well as after school care. It was concluded that college personnel and students alike were ready for Wesleyan's Child Development Center to expand its services. Survey forms are appended. (Author/RH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED182044

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

AN ASSESSMENT OF CHILD CARE NEEDS OF STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF AT WEST VIRGINIA WESLEYAN COLLEGE

BY

KATHRYN L.HICKS

A Research Report Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements in

C & I 391
Problems In
Early Childhood Education

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Kathryn L. Hicks

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

College of Human Resources

WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY

December 1979

PS011200

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of the Problem	2
Significance of the Problem	2
Statement of the Hypotheses	3
Assumptions and Limitations	3
Definition of Terms	4
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	5
RESEARCH PROCEDURE	8
ANALYSIS OF DATA	9
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	13
REFERENCE LIST	16
APPENDIX	18

Introduction

In the United States today more than seven and one-half million children under the age of six have employed mothers. A far larger number of young school age children with working parents need care before and after school. In fact, this phenomenon of the working mother is so common that it has become the norm, rather than the exception. According to United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, approximately thirty-six per cent of mothers of preschoolers and forty-four per cent of mothers with schoolage children were working outside the home in 1975. With 1979-80 conditions such as inflation, smaller families, desire to pursue a career and/or attend college, the increase in single parent families and wider employment opportunities for women, many mothers became employed; therefore this figure is undoubtably higher today. (Moore,78)

Many men and women who would attend a college or university find it difficult to do so, because of the problems involved in finding quality child care while juggling class and work schedules. (Cargill,79) The needs of these students and employed persons, either at the college or in the community could be met by a campus child care center. According to Holdnak (1978), forty per cent of the nation's accredited colleges and universities offer some kind of early child care services. About ninety are classified as day care centers, one hundred and thirty five as nursery schools, seventy five as laboratory schools, and one

hundred and twenty five as combination types.

With the previously mentioned conditions in mind, this research proposal was developed. Because West Virginia Wesleyan College is responsive to the needs of employees, students and community, the administration granted permission for a child care needs assessment to be conducted. It is the hope of the researcher that the study will examine what their child care needs are, as well as to make recommendations as to the role that the existing laboratory school, known as Wesleyan's Child Development Center should play in meeting these needs, both now and in the future.

Statement of the Problem

What are the supportive and developmental child care services that are needed by the employees and students of West Virginia Wesleyan College?

Significance of the Problem

The Education Department of West Virginia Wesleyan College is presently examining the role of the Child Development Center. It is the hope of the college administration that the center become self-supporting. Also, funding for day care has been received by Upshur County Community Action and Appalachian Mental Health; yet each agency lacks the facility to initiate

and operate the programs which were funded. Both agencies have approached the college for housing and joint sponsership. This study should show how much the Wesleyan Community would benefit from such an agreement.

Statement of the Hypotheses

It is the hypothesis of this researcher that a situation similar to the national one previously discussed exists within the Wesleyan Community. Because there is only one licensed day care center in the town of Buckhannon, West Virginia, the location of West Virginia Wesleyan College, the hypothesis appears even more likely.

Assumptions and Limitations

Assumptions

In carrying out this study the following assumptions were made:

1) Employees and students will want group care on campus rather than in a day care home or child's home.
2) Campus child care centers exist as an integral part of the college or university.
3) Respondents answered surveys truthfully.
4) A child care facility has potential for becoming a fringe benefit for employees.

5) That respondents are aware that Wesleyan's Child Development Center is representative of quality child care, and serves as a laboratory school for the students in education, home economics,nursing and other related disciplines in the liberal arts curriculum.

Limitations

The limitations of the study were the following:

1) The study was limited to information contained in the Needs Assessment Survey.
2) The study was limited due to the nature of the population. Those students and employees already on campus have made arrangements for their children, or they would not be able to come to Wesleyan to work or study.
3) Only those persons who wish to respond to the survey will answer.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined in order to increase understanding:

1) Day Care/ Child Care.
   The provision of care and protection on a regular basis for children outside their homes for part or all of a day.
2) Wesleyan Community
   These persons that are employed and/or classified as

students at West Virginia Wesleyan College.

3) Before school care

Care provided for children that attend public school previous to the morning opening of that school.

4) After school care

Care provided for children that attend public school during the hours that school is finished for the day until such time that the parent's work day is over.

5) Vacation/snow day care

Care of school age children on days when public school is closed either due to vacation and/or dangerous road conditions and parents must work.

Review of Related Literature

In all of the literature reviewed, there is agreement that the early childhood years are critical to the adjustment and future well being of the individual. Child care centers are playing an increasingly important role in supplementing parental care during preschool years. Colleges and universities have traditionally been a part of the child care movement both in research and teacher training.

History reveals that in the mid-twenties Dr. Arnold Gessell of Yale University started the child care movement in the

United States. He established a "guidance nursery" to which young children came for observation and testing. The Merrill-Palmer nursery school and the Iowa Child Welfare Research Station followed soon after. By the mid-thirties, nursery schools or laboratory schools were found in most of the major colleges and universities inthe United States. They were research oriented and established primarily for students to learn how children grow and develop, and how they learn and become unique personalities.

During the depression and then World War II, the first mass expansion of child care facilities in the United States was realized. WPA operated day nurseries helped to provide employment during the depression. World War II brought additional need for day care as vast numbers of women entered the work force. However, after the war, the government gradually withdrew from operating child care centers. This left center basedprograms primarily up to private individuals, colleges or universities who continued to operate centers for purposes of research and teacher training.

The "War on Poverty" in the 1960's gave the United States Head Start for young children who were disadvantaged. Not onlydid Head Start enrich young children's lives, but the provision of child care was hoped to enable low income mothers to work or train to work. This was intended to help them to

break out of the welfare cycle.

In the 1970's there was realized a need for qualified persons to staff these centers. Teacher training programs became expanded to include teachers of very young children. Some universities and colleges maintain child development centers to provide opportunities for observation and training experiences needed by students enrolled in child development or early childhood education programs. Others take a multi-disciplinary approach and involve departments of psychology, social welfare, health, recreation, art and music,nursing, as well as the traditional home economics and education majors.

The ERIC Document Reproduction Service revealed three studies done at universities in the 1970's to determine the need for child care among faculty, staff and students. All three studies indicated a definite need for such services. (Bravy,76) (Tincher,74) (Holdnak,78) These three were of special interest to this researcher as they were very relevant to this research proposal. They will be cited in the discussion to follow.

In light of the literature reviewed, it is indicated that there is a growing interest and concern for day care centers for young children. Also evident is that custodial care will not suffice. Respondents to questionnaires wanted education,

health and family support components to be an integral part of the day care experience.

The predicted economic and social conditions of the 1980's indicate that the trend toward campus child care facilities will continue to expand. Consideration needs to be given to the development of quality programs that will benefit the child as well as the parents, students and institution.

Research Procedure

With the approval of the administration of West Virginia Wesleyan College and the Child Development Center Advisory Council, a child care needs assessment survey of all college personnel and married students was conducted.

The survey instrument was pilot tested on a different population. The parents of children currently attending Wesleyan's Child Development Center were sent the survey instrument and a cover letter describing the research porposal. (Appendix A and B) Their role was that of testing the survey for clarity. Results of their needs were not utilized in this study. The instrument was edited in light of their responses. Then the refined instrument was sent by campus mail to all faculty and staff of the college. This represents three hundred and thirteen families. An additional forty five surveys

were mailed to married students, for a total of three hundred and fifty seven families represented. A cover letter accompanied the Child Care Needs Assessment. (Appendix C and D) A reminder letter was sent one week later. Signs were posted in heavy traffic areas. A reminder to return the surveys was placed in the Quick Check, a weekly newsletter telling of happenings on campus.

Analysis of Data

From the faculty and staff one hundred and twenty two surveys were returned for a return rate of thirty nine percent. Student's rate of return was thirty two percent:

Groups	Sent	Responses	Return
Faculty and Staff	313	122	39%
Students	44	14	32%
	357	136	38%

Of the employees who have children under the age of ten (and most likely to utilize services), a seventy five percent (thirty nine families) rate of return was realized. Of those persons who could concievably use such a service, only twelve

did not respond. Over half of the total respondents either signed the survey as an indication of support and /or added supportive statements as to the desirability of adding day care services to the existing laboratory school at the Child Development Center.

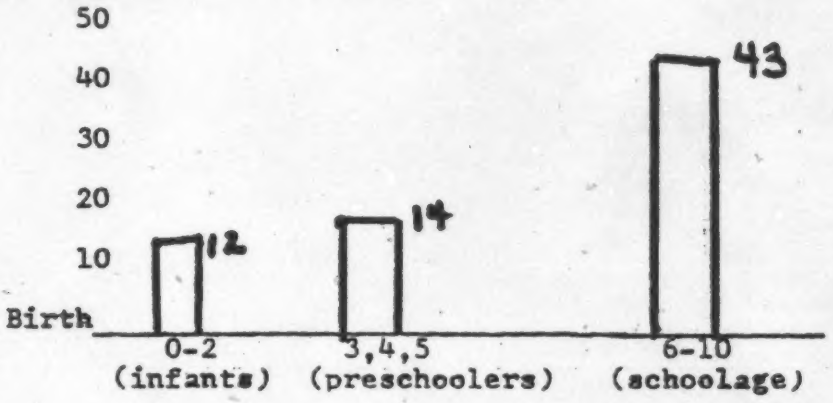
The following are representative quotations from individual survey responses under question number seven, "Additional Comments that may be helpful for planning purposes." A faculty member with a three year old says "Would like to see expanded quality care so that both parents could work." An expectant faculty member and another planning a family say, "Infant care facilities are desperately needed in this community.. Would appreciate services in the future". In addition, parents of school age children say, "I really need arrangements after school, holidays and always summer vacations."

Another faculty member addresses two different components. "Suitable care on snow days is a real problem. With the college in session at all times the children have no care! Should help college"2" and allow more "Mothers" to attend day classes at Wesleyan. The return to the college should be great with increased enrollments and more faculty time to devote to duties."

Many of those signing and offering statements had no children of their own that needed services, but knew of others in the community that did. One such respondent stated, "I am delighted

this is being considered. I believe this service to the community is essential as more families are finding it necessary for parents to be in the work force. Also this community has many single parent families and some are displaced homemakers who have need for decent services for children."

In other data analysis, the ages of children are distributed as shown in this graph:

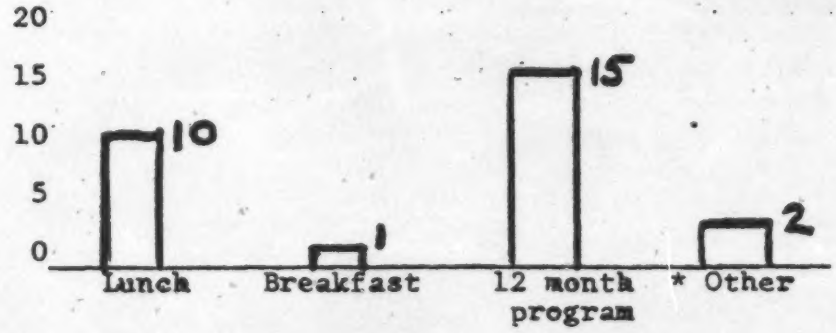


Most of the respondents that made arrangements for their childrenwhile they are at work indicated that children ages birth to two years were either with a relative or babysitter. These same arrangements were made for after school care in the schoolage bracket. Frequently an older sibling was responsible for care. In the preschool bracket, parents have the child enrolled at a combination of care arrangements. Some common combinations include Wesleyan's Child Development Center, public kindergarten, babysitter or local day care center that

offers only costodial care. Picking up children and transferring them from one facility to another is a very real problem. Work schedules do not always lend themselves to school schedules.

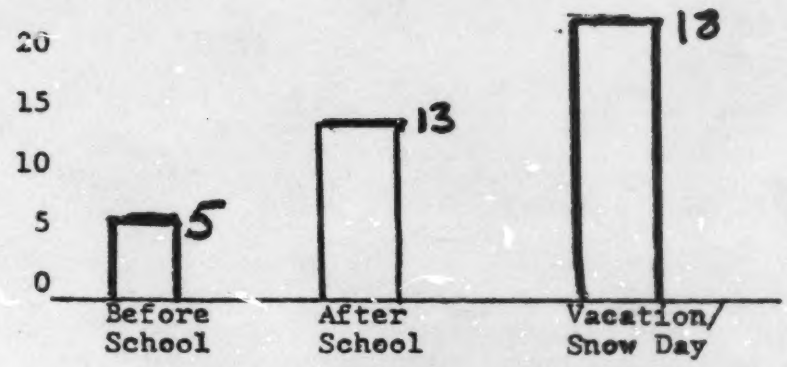
Basically, the respondents are pleased with the quality of the child care arrangements, with the exception of transferring children during the day in order to provide optimum early childhood experiences for their children. The data shows that the median costs of the services for child care is $22.00 per week.

The following graph shows the added components that are felt to be beneficial to children by the Wesleyan Community. Note that the two major addition to the services already offered are 1) lunch and 2) making the program a twelve month operation.



*Saturday care and Drop-in service

Specifically, relating to serving schoolage children vacation and snow day care receive top priority.



All but six respondents feel that the hours between 8 A.M. and 5 P.M. would be feasible operational hours. Along these same lines, all but one respondent felt that five days/ week would meet their needs.

To give a true picture of the feeling for day care on this campus it should be noted that of all the responses only two were negative. 98.5 % of all respondents are either in favor of or are neutral to the addition af child care services to Wesleyan's Child Development Center.

Summary and Conclusions

This researcher has found that indeed, West Virginia Wesleyan could benefit greatly by adding day care to those services already offered by it's laboratory school, known as Wesleyan's Child Development Center. Since funding for such programs has been received by two agencies, either of which would jointly sponser such an endeavor, this task could be accomplished if

proper support would be offered. A study should be conducted as tothe most feasible approach to expansion of services. Concerns such as facility, staffing and financing need to be reviewed. The qualifications and expertise of faculty, staff and students should be utilized.

A major benefit to the college would be to consider child care as an employee fringe benefit.(Perry, 1979) Many industries today are doing just that. Certainly, prospective faculty, staff or students with young children or those planning families would view quality child care as as added incentive to come to West Virginia Wesleyan College!

Perhaps, a word should be said about the nature of the population surveyed. In order to meet the obligations of employer and /or class and study schedules, those already on campus have made arrangements for their children or they would not be able to come to the campus. A needs assessment survey should be done of those who cannot enroll in school or work unless they have child care available.

To quote Jean Childs Young, who was appointed by President Carter to chair the United States National Commission for the United Nations International Year of the Child (IYC), " the year's (1979) program was to create a dialogue across the nation that will lead to action on behalf of children" (Williams 1979) So it was the purpose of this study at Wesleyan; to create a

dialogue on campus and community that will lead to action on behalf of our children. Zelma Felton, assistant executive director of the Child Welfare League of America explains, " We like to think of ourselves as being very child oriented in this country, but we're not. Services for children and families are lacking. (Williams,1979) Wesleyan's services have been with us since 1960. For twenty years the program has not changed appreciably. The 1980's are forecast to bring great economic, social and educational change. This study of child care needs of the Wesleyan Community is an indication that college personnel and students alike are aware of these changes in it's prospective students and employees. They are ready for Wesleyan's Child Development Center to expand it's services and meet their needs , both now and in the future.

REFERENCE LIST

Bravy, S.S. & Sedlacek, W.E. Student and Faculty-staff interest in a university sponsered day care facility. Maryland University, College Park, Maryland, 1976. (ERIC Document Reporduction Service ED 124046)

Cargill, G.H. Child care on campus. Young Children. Vol.34 September 1979.

Highberger, R. & Schramm, C. Child development for day care workers. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1976.

Holdnak, M.W. An analysis of child care centers in the state supported colleges and universities of Florida. Masters Thesis. Florida State University. December 1978. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service ED 167250)

Keyserling, M.B. Provide day care for our children. Young Children, Vol. 32 January 1977.

Moore, S.G. Working mothers and their children. Research in review. Young Children Vol. 34 November 1978.

Perry, C. Day care for infants and toddlers: a theoretical construct. Innovator. University of Michigan, September 1979.

Stevens, J.H. & King, E.W. Administering early childhood programs. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1976.

Tincher, V. Child care at USC. A study for action. University of Southern California, Los Angelos, California. July 1974. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service ED 095744)

(17)

Williams, M.S. The year of the child. Did it do any good? McCalls December 1979.

APPENDIX (18)

A. Cover letter accompanying pilot testing of survey instrument.

B. Informal Child Care Needs Survey #1.

C. Cover letter accompanying refined survey to full population.

D. Informal Child Care Needs Survey # 2.

M E M O

November 7, 1979

TO: Parents of Kindergarten and Nursery Children

FROM: Kathy Hicks,
Wesleyan's Child Development Center

RE: Child Care Needs Assessment

It has become increasingly evident that there may exist a need to extend the scope and services of Wesleyan's Child Development Center. I am presently doing research on Day Care as part of my graduate studies at West Virginia University.

Please fill out the attached Child Care Needs Assessment Survey—even if you are not employed outside the home. The faculty and staff at Wesleyan will be asked to fill out this survey, after you show me if it works.

Your assistance will be greatly appreciated and may well determine the feasibility of several planned improvements serving both Wesleyan and the Buckhannon area in general. This can only be possible if you complete the applicable blanks on the survey instrument! Please return it to me by Friday, Nov. 9th. Bring your questions to the parent meeting Thursday or call me at work (473-8348) or home (472-0094). Thank you!

INFORMAL CHILD CARE NEEDS SURVEY

1. What are the ages of your children? _____,_____,_____,_____,_____

If ages are between birth and 12 years, please continue. If not, go to item 7.

2. Please describe any arrangements made for your child while you and/or your spouse are at work.

3. Please rate the quality of these child care arrangements.

_____Very Good _____Good _____Fair _____Poor

4. Approximately what are the costs of these services?

_____Average cost per week.

5. Please check the components that would be beneficial to you and your child.

_____lunch

_____breakfast

_____12 month operational program

School age children:

_____before school care--delivery to school

_____after school care--pick up at school

_____vacation or snow day care

6. Please check the blank most appropriate for your needs.

Hours of Operation

_____ 7 A.M. to 6 P.M. _____ 8 A.M. to 12 N.

_____ 8 A.M. to 5 P.M. _____ 12 N. to 5 P.M.

_____Other_____

7. Additional Comments that may be helpful for planning purposes.

8. If you are supportive of adding day care to the current services of the Child Development Center, and want to have more input, please sign your name.

_____

TO: Members of the Wesleyan Community

FROM: Kathy Hicks, Lead Teacher, Wesleyan Child Development Center

RE: Child Care Needs Assessment

It has become increasingly evident that there may exist among the Wesleyan Community a need to extend the scope and services of the Child Development Center. I am presently doing research on Day Care as part of my graduate studies at W.V.U.. The administration has granted permission for me to conduct an informal survey of your child care needs.

Your assistance will be greatly appreciated and may well determine the feasibility of several tentatively planned improvements serving both the Wesleyan Community and the Buckhannon area in general. Such can only be accomplished if you complete the applicable blanks on the attached survey instrument..... even if you have no children who need day care! Your comments and knowledge of others' need will be useful.

Please return by campus mail, box 139 by 11/30/79----this Friday.

THANK YOU!

INFORMAL CHILD CARE NEEDS SURVEY Appendix D

1. What are the ages of your children? ____,____,____,____,____,____

   If ages are between birth and 12 years, please continue. If not, go to item 7.

2. Please describe any arrangements made for your child while you and/or your spouse are at work.

3. Please rate the quality of these child care arrangements.

   ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Fair ___ Poor

4. Approximately what are the costs of these services?

   _____ Average cost per week.

5. Please check the components that would be beneficial to you and your child.

   ___ Lunch

   ___ Breakfast

   ___ 12 month program

   ___ other (explain)_____

   School age children;

   ___ before school care--delivery to school

   ___ After school care --pick up at school

   ___ Vacation or snow day care

6. Please check the blanks most appropriate for your needs.

   Hours of Operation

   ___ 7 A.M. to 6.P.M.

   ___ 8 A.M. to 5 P.M.

   ___ 8 A.M. to 12 N.

   ___ 12 N. to 5 P.M.

   Days per week

   ___ 5 ___ 3 ___ 1

   ___ 4 ___ 2

7. Additional Comments that may be helpful for planning purposes.

8. If you are supportive of adding day care to the current services of the Child Development Center, and want to have more input, please sign your name.

   _____